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NSC BRIEFING

1 March 1955

VIETNAM

I. Viet Minh expected soon to press complaints that US is wrecking Geneva agreement.

A. Canadian truce officials told General Collins they expect Viet Minh to formalize charges against Manila pact and activities of US MAAG group as violation of Geneva pact.

B. Chou En-lai has already lodged protest with Eden that Manila pact conference violated Geneva agreement on several counts and laying the blame on the US.

1. Probably prelude to Viet Minh action.

C. Truce commission refused consider similar charges when Viet Minh General Giap released them in December in form of propaganda blast also addressed to Molotov and Eden.

D. Canadian warned, however, that if formal charges submitted now, commission probably would have to take them under consideration.

1. Indian chairman likely to insist on exhaustive study.

ARMY review(s) completed.

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II. Viet Minh, in fact, guilty of gross violations.

- A. Have obtained prohibited war materiel from China, including antisircraft artillery and tanks.**
- B. Prevented evacuation of refugees desiring to go south.**
- C. Have instigated violence in Laos.**
- D. May be difficult to make countercharges stick, however, in view of report from trace team stationed on border that there is no evidence illicit shipment of military equipment.**
- E. Viet Minh can be expected to meet other charges with similar accusations of their own.**

III.

[redacted] Viet Minh retains extensive influence in South Vietnam.

- A. Vietnamese officer recently toured five of 19 provinces in South Vietnam.**
- B. In this area immediately south of Saigon, anti-Communist sentiment largely confined to merchants, intellectuals and government officials.**
- C. In two provinces 50-70 percent of population are pro-Viet Minh, in other three 5-10 percent.**

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- D. In all cases, most of remaining population are either subject to Viet Minh terrorism or are neutral.
- E. In addition to "goon squads," Viet Minh presence maintained by network of cells, clandestine meetings and extensive propaganda work conducted by individuals as well as teams.
1. System held together by couriers.
- F. Significant that these provinces not among those considered Viet Minh-controlled before cease-fire.

G.

evidence of increased governmental authority and indicated situation can be further improved if Diem regime asserts itself militarily and carries through on reforms.

- H. True situation still problematical, but these reports clearly indicate magnitude of security problem which Diem regime only beginning to deal with.

IV. Other information has definitely established that the Viet Minh is actively engaged in subversive activity in South Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia.

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C. Also in late December

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[redacted] Viet Minh was organiz-
ing farmers into agricultural "cells" and
directed to refuse to pay taxes, work for
landlords or co-operate with government.

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